

A Guide to the York County (Va.) Convict Register, 1889-1951

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1889-1951

A Collection in the Library of Virginia York County (Va.) Reel 61
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History

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Author: Callie Lou Freed

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Descriptive Summary

reel number

York County (Va.) Reel 61

Language

English

Collector

York County (Va.) Circuit Court.

Physical Characteristics

1 microfilm reel

Location

Library of Virginia

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Use Restrictions

Use microfilm copy, York County (Va.) Reel 61.

Acquisition Information

Reel 61 was generated by a field operator, from the Virginia State Library's (now the Library of Virginia) Microfilm Section, while filming in the Circuit Court Clerk's Office.

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Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

Additional York County Court Records can be found on microfilm at the Library of Virginia. Consult ["A Guide to Virginia County and City Records on Microfilm."](#)

Related Material

The entire case on Hezekiah Cook is available in "The Southeastern Reporter," Vol. 77, pages 608-611. This issue is found on line by goggling Cook's name.

Location of Originals

The original volume is found in the York County Circuit Court Clerk's Office.

Historical Information

York County was one of the eight shires, or counties, first enumerated in 1634. The county originally was named Charles River County, for King Charles I. A record of 7 January 1634 employs the name York County, and a statute of 1643 officially changed the name to York County, probably in honor of James, duke of York, the second son of King Charles I, and later King James II.

During the 1869-1870 session, the General Assembly passed an "Act to Secure Identification of Persons Convicted of Criminal Offences." On 2 November 1870, the act was approved. The act specified that "every clerk of the court of each county and corporation shall keep a register of full and accurate descriptive lists of person convicted in his own or any other court of record of his county or corporation, of felony or other infamous offence, and a duly certified and attested copy of any such descriptive list may be used as prima facie evidence of the facts therein stated in any question of identity. Such registers shall be kept written up, well indexed, and shall be open to public inspection at reasonable hours. The register shall follow a set form and each descriptive list shall be attested by said clerk."

In addition, "the clerk of every court of record of each county or corporation, other than the county or corporation court, shall within ten days from the date of conviction of any person in his court of any offence mentioned in the first section of this act, deliver to the clerk of the county or corporation court, for record in said register, an attested descriptive list of the person so convicted, in the form hereinbefore prescribed." The judges of the respective courts are responsible for seeing that the provisions of the act are "punctually and properly carried out" by their respective clerks. The act was amended on 18 January 1871 and outlined the following: "For the services mentioned in this or the first section of this act, the clerk shall be entitled to a fee of fifty cents, to be paid out of the state treasury." By and large, the county and circuit court clerks went about compiling these registers throughout the counties of Virginia as late as the 1960s.

Order books and/or Minute books record all matters brought before the court when it was in session and may contain important information not found anywhere else. A wide variety of information is found in order/minute books--including individuals convicted of felonies.

This original register was created by the County, Circuit and Magistrate's Courts. A Magistrate's Court is defined as a court with jurisdiction over minor criminal offenses; such a court also has the power to bind over for trial persons accused of more serious offenses.

Scope and Content

York County (Va.) Convict Register, 1889-1951, is a list of "persons convicted of felony or other infamous offences" in the county. Based on a set form, the listings of each conviction include the individual's name in full and any aliases, the present and last known residence of the accused, the color or race of the individual (including white and colored), the individual's height, eye color, hair color and any identifying marks, the apparent or known age of the accused, his or her occupation, the offence, the court in which convicted, the date of conviction and page of record and whether the judgment was reversed or pardon granted and date thereof. Once such individual was Hezekiah Cook. He was convicted of voluntary manslaughter in April 1913. Governor Byrd restored his civil rights in September 1928.

Index Terms

Corporate Names:

York County (Va.) Circuit Court.

Subjects:

African American prisoners--Virginia--York County.
African Americans--Employment--Virginia--York County.
African Americans--History--1877-1964.
African Americans--Virginia--York County.
Occupations--Virginia--York County.
Prisoners--Virginia--York County.
Public records--Virginia--York County.

Geographical Names:

York County--History.

Genre and Form Terms:

Convicts--Virginia--York County.
Criminal court records--Virginia--York County.
Local government records--Virginia--York County.
Order books--Virginia--York County.
Registers (lists)--Virginia--York County.

Added Entry - Corporate Name:

York County (Va.) County Court.
York County (Va.) Magistrate's Court.

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.